



Coast Guard Flag Voice 58

NATIONAL MAIL ORDER PHARMACY PROGRAM

The Department of Defense (DoD) has contracted with Merck-Medco Managed Care to provide eligible military beneficiaries with a mail order service for maintenance prescriptions. If you or a family member take a medication long-term, you may want to consider using the National Mail Order Pharmacy (NMOP) program, which conveniently delivers your prescription to your home or temporary stateside address -- often at a cost savings to you.

Eligible beneficiaries include:

- All active duty uniformed service members worldwide.
- All TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries residing in the Continental U.S.
- All overseas TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries with APO or FPO addresses.
- All Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Medicare-eligible beneficiaries.
- Uniformed Services Family Health Program enrollees.

All eligible beneficiaries must be in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). However, they may be enrolled in TRICARE Prime, Extra, or Standard.

If you have other health insurance than TRICARE, you will not be able to use NMOP. Legally, DoD cannot be the primary payer for medical services, including prescriptions. TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries may submit a claim with an explanation of benefits (EOB) to TRICARE as second payer for amounts their primary health insurance does not cover.

The NMOP program is for long-term maintenance prescriptions; it delivers up to 90 days' worth of non-narcotic and up to 30 days' worth of narcotic medications. If you need medications such as antibiotics or pain relievers to treat an emergency condition, have your local pharmacy fill your prescription.

NMOP offers a broader selection of medications than most military pharmacies can provide. The NMOP plan offers essentially all non-injectable prescription medications TRICARE or DoD policy allows. Selected self-administered injectable medications and those commonly administered in the home also are available. A short list of medications is designated DoD-"non-preferred." If your prescription is for such a medication, Merck-Medco will contact your provider and usually request a change to a "preferred" alternate medication DoD considers as offering significant clinical or economic advantages over the "non-preferred" medication. If your provider agrees it is clinically appropriate, NMOP will fill your prescription with the "preferred" alternative. If your provider does not agree, NMOP usually will fill your prescription as written.

NMOP must comply with the same generic substitution policy military treatment facilities have implemented for the past 15 years. To ensure its health care is effective, DoD uses only those generics the Food and Drug Administration rates as therapeutically equivalent. If a generic equivalent is not available, NMOP will dispense the branded medication at no additional cost. For a complete list of available medications, contact Merck-Medco, or visit its website: <http://www.pec.ha.osd.mil/NMOP/NMOPhome.htm>.

While the program is available to active duty members at no cost, each non-active duty beneficiary's prescription requires a modest co-payment, but no deductible fee. The cost per prescription is:

Active duty family members - \$4.00 per prescription

Retirees and their family members - \$8.00 per prescription

The flat co-payment may be more cost-advantageous to you when compared to the 20-25% share you must pay when filling a prescription under TRICARE Standard, especially for a 90-day supply.

You can get more information or start using NMOP by calling Merck-Medco Customer Service at 1-800-903-4680 to request a registration form. You register only once. For your first mail-order prescription, mail the prescription, completed registration, and co-payment (if for a non-active duty recipient) to Merck-Medco Managed Care. If your doctor has authorized refills, you will receive refill slips with your prescription.

Merck-Medco Customer Service hours are:

Weekdays, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Eastern Time

Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., Eastern Time

Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., Eastern Time

A registered pharmacist is available for emergency consultation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You also may contact the health benefits advisor at any military treatment facility.

Please note: The National Mail Order Pharmacy will enter all of the prescriptions it fills for drug interactions. However, it will NOT have a record of scripts filled by other DOD or civilian pharmacies. It is ALWAYS a good idea to tell you doctor and pharmacy about other prescription medications.

Regards, FL Ames

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